

What is claimed is:

1. A compound 8 to 80 nucleobases in length targeted to a nucleic acid molecule encoding SOCS-3, wherein said compound specifically hybridizes with said nucleic acid molecule encoding SOCS-3 (SEQ ID NO: 4) and inhibits the expression of SOCS-3.

2. The compound of claim 1 comprising 12 to 50 nucleobases in length.

3. The compound of claim 2 comprising 15 to 30 nucleobases in length.

4. The compound of claim 1 comprising an oligonucleotide.

5. The compound of claim 4 comprising an antisense oligonucleotide.

6. The compound of claim 4 comprising a DNA oligonucleotide.

7. The compound of claim 4 comprising an RNA oligonucleotide.

8. The compound of claim 4 comprising a chimeric oligonucleotide.

9. The compound of claim 4 wherein at least a portion of said compound hybridizes with RNA to form an oligonucleotide-RNA duplex.

10. The compound of claim 1 having at least 70% complementarity with a nucleic acid molecule encoding SOCS-3 (SEQ ID NO: 4) said compound specifically hybridizing to and inhibiting the expression of SOCS-3.

11. The compound of claim 1 having at least 80% complementarity with a nucleic acid molecule encoding SOCS-3 (SEQ ID NO: 4) said compound specifically hybridizing to and inhibiting the expression of SOCS-3.

12. The compound of claim 1 having at least 90%

complementarity with a nucleic acid molecule encoding SOCS-3 (SEQ ID NO: 4) said compound specifically hybridizing to and inhibiting the expression of SOCS-3.

13. The compound of claim 1 having at least 95% complementarity with a nucleic acid molecule encoding SOCS-3 (SEQ ID NO: 4) said compound specifically hybridizing to and inhibiting the expression of SOCS-3.

14. The compound of claim 1 having at least one modified internucleoside linkage, sugar moiety, or nucleobase.

15. The compound of claim 1 having at least one 2'-O-methoxyethyl sugar moiety.

16. The compound of claim 1 having at least one phosphorothioate internucleoside linkage.

17. The compound of claim 1 having at least one 5-methylcytosine.

18. A method of inhibiting the expression of SOCS-3 in cells or tissues comprising contacting said cells or tissues with the compound of claim 1 so that expression of SOCS-3 is inhibited.

19. A method of screening for a modulator of SOCS-3, the method comprising the steps of:

a. contacting a preferred target segment of a nucleic acid molecule encoding SOCS-3 with one or more candidate modulators of SOCS-3, and

b. identifying one or more modulators of SOCS-3 expression which modulate the expression of SOCS-3.

20. The method of claim 19 wherein the modulator of SOCS-3 expression comprises an oligonucleotide, an antisense oligonucleotide, a DNA oligonucleotide, an RNA oligonucleotide, an RNA oligonucleotide having at least a portion of said RNA oligonucleotide capable of hybridizing with RNA to form an oligonucleotide-RNA duplex, or a chimeric oligonucleotide.

21. A diagnostic method for identifying a disease state comprising identifying the presence of SOCS-3 in a sample using at least one of the primers comprising SEQ ID NOs 6 or 7, or the probe comprising SEQ ID NO: 8.

22. A kit or assay device comprising the compound of claim 1.

23. A method of treating an animal having a disease or condition associated with SOCS-3 comprising administering to said animal a therapeutically or prophylactically effective amount of the compound of claim 1 so that expression of SOCS-3 is inhibited.

24. The method of claim 23 wherein the disease or condition is an inflammatory condition.